

REMARKS

By way of summary, claims 1-6, 8-19 and 21-31 were pending in this application. In the present amendment, claims 17-19, 21-22, 24, 26-28 and 30-31 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 23 and 25 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-6, 8-16, 23, 25 and 29 remain pending for consideration.

Allowable Subject Matter – Claims 24 and 31

The Examiner further indicated that claim 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 23 has therefore been amended to include the limitations of previously pending dependent claim 24. It is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 23 and dependent claim 25 are now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner indicated that claim 31 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claim 1 has therefore been amended to include the limitations of previously pending dependent claim 31. It is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 1 and dependent claim 29 are now in condition for allowance.

Rejections of Claims 1, 17-19, 21-23, 26, 27, 29 and 30

It is respectfully submitted that the rejections of previously pending claims 1, 17-19, 21-23, 26, 27, 29 and 30 remain improper for the reasons set forth in the Amendment filed on November 19, 2007. However, these claims have been withdrawn or amended to advance prosecution in the case but without prejudice to further prosecution of this subject matter in a related application.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the amendments to the claims as indicated above can be entered, since such amendments do not raise new issues that will require further search or consideration. If the Examiner believes that new issues have been raised that will require the mailing of an Advisory Action and/or that will prevent entry of the claim amendments, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney. It is hoped that such a telephone

conference can resolve such issues or other issues expediently to facilitate issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

Respectfully submitted,
SEED Intellectual Property Law Group PLLC

/Jason T Evans/
Jason T. Evans
Registration No. 57,862

JTE:jrh

701 Fifth Avenue, Suite 5400
Seattle, Washington 98104
Phone: (206) 622-4900
Fax: (206) 682-6031

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